

Redeployment Procedures for Academic¹ and Academic Related Staff

1. Objectives

It is recognised by the University and the Open University Branch of the University and College Union (OUBUCU) that in the event that staff reductions are shown to be necessary in a particular Unit or Sub-Unit, and to facilitate flexibility, procedures should be agreed to provide a mechanism by which staff may be offered alternative posts within the University, thus providing alternative employment wherever possible, consistent with the needs of the University.

2. Definition of terms

2.1 Reallocation of Duties

According to UAP Conditions of Employment, the staff member "will undertake such duties (as may be reasonably assigned to him/her and - in Academic Related Terms and Conditions only) as may be necessary for the furtherance of the University's objectives".

In addition, in contracts for UAP staff it states "Your attention is drawn to paragraph 40 (Duties) and in particular that you will be required to undertake such other duties as may be assigned by your Head of Unit from time to time in furtherance of the University's objectives. The University reserves the right to make changes to your duties and to require you to work in other areas of the University and be subject to any special conditions applying in those areas". (There was a similar flexibility clause included since 1989). For staff with tenure the wording refers only to changes and moves 'within the job category'.

In accordance with the framework agreement with the OUBUCU on flexibility, the OUBUCU have indicated their willingness to consider specific proposals for such further flexibility as appropriate, as situations arise.

In addition, the University and the OUBUCU agree, during periods of financial stringency, to a flexible approach to requests to fill vacancies other than through normal advertisement in accordance with the attached Code of Practice.

Any such changes will be defined as a Reallocation of Duties.

2.2 Redeployment

Where an individual is moved into a different substantially unrelated post, or where a change of duties has the effect of changing the category of staff, change of location or involves a change of Unit or Sub-Unit, this will be defined as Redeployment.

¹ As defined by the OU Charter and Statute, the term academic staff is deemed to include research staff

2.3 Staffing Levels

Changes should be in accordance with the appropriate staffing levels in Unit Plans or in accordance with University strategic decisions.

3. Procedures

3.1 Redeployment Redundancy Situation

When a member of staff is under notice by reason of redundancy, the member will be interviewed by the Head of Unit or nominee regarding the options available. A member of the People Hub will be present at the interview. The Head of Unit will investigate opportunities for alternative posts/duties elsewhere within their Unit/Sub-Unit, and will seek to reach agreement on redeployment to alternative duties. At the discretion of the member of staff, they may be accompanied and/or represented by a Trades Union representative or a nominated friend who is a member of the University staff. Every effort will be made to find suitable alternative employment. Where it is not possible to find suitable alternative duties, and/or provided suitable alternative duties have not been unreasonably refused, early retirement or severance, as appropriate, in accordance with any package approved by Council at the time, will be offered (in a potential redundancy situation this will be an option).

During any period within which staff are under notice by reason of redundancy, external (but not necessarily internal) advertising of vacant posts will be suspended where posts are of the same category (e.g. central academic) and grade, and where the individual meets the essential requirements of the post. These vacancies will be brought to their attention as they arise, and if they express an interest in a vacancy in the University, they will be treated as applicants for that vacancy. Provided that they satisfy the essential requirements for the post as stated in the person specification, they will be interviewed and considered along with other candidates. In addition staff under notice by reason of redundancy will be allowed to take reasonable time off to attend external interviews and given support in the form of internally/externally provided career counselling and guidance through the People Hub. Heads of Units will take this into account when assigning duties/workload.

3.2

Where a member of staff is re-deployed, (including redeployment following an advertised vacancy) the following policy applies:

- 1) Where the proposed change involves a change of location (i.e. from one site to another), payments under the Movement of Staff Policy will apply.
- 2) If as a result of an agreed change of post, category of staff, location or Unit/Sub-Unit, the salary or terms and conditions of service of the new category are different from those already held by the member of staff concerned, the member will retain their current salary progression (cost of living award, and increments) on a personally protected basis for a period of up to 3 years but will move on to the terms and conditions appropriate to the new post. The University will be prepared to consider an extension beyond 3 years according to individual circumstances, and will normally do so when individuals are making endeavours to find alternative employment at their substantive grade.
- 3) Training will be given to enable the new duties to be carried out satisfactorily.
- 4) Re-deployed staff, under the terms of this agreement, will be entitled to a 3 month trial period.

- 5) From the time the member of staff has been notified of dismissal by reason of redundancy, these procedures will operate for a maximum of 6 months or the period of notice whichever is the shorter.

NOTE. This procedure will also be used in a potential redundancy situation.